

CREDIBILITY
OF THE
Christian Doctrine
OF THE
RESURRECTION.
A
SERMON

Preached (in part) at the Publick *Lecture* in
BOSTON, July 24th 1729.
The Thursday after the *Funeral*

OF
William Welstead, Esq;

By *Benjamin Colman.*

Luke xiv. 14. *Thou shalt be recompensed at the
Resurrection of the Just.*

BOSTON: Printed for *Thomas Hancock*,
at the Bible and Three Crowns in Ann-Street.

1 7 2 9.

®

h
ons

4.4.4. 22.4

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

BRITISH MUSEUM

BRITISH MUSEUM

BRITISH MUSEUM



BRITISH MUSEUM

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Reverend

Mr. William Welsted,

Pastor of a Church in Boston.

Sir,

Send you at your desire the following Discourse, the first part of which was bro't into the publick Lecture upon the Death of your Honoured Father. The Doctrine & Hope of the Resurrection of the Just is more precious to pious surviving Relatives, than all the chief Spices of the East, with which they anoint their Dead. These can't preserve the Body from Putrefaction, but that shews it raised in Power & Incorruption, and a spiritual Body.

What but the sure & certain Hope of this was your & your dear Parents support & consolation, in the long languid & feeble state that preceeded his Dissolution? The Earnest of a blessed Resurrection we all beheld, all his Life time, in the visible Fruits of an early and abiding Sanctification.

You knew more of his secret Walk with GOD, and of his Family Orders & Devotions, and of the strict Sanctification of the Lords-day in his House; But the Town were Witnesses of his upright & godly Conversation, of his zeal for GOD's House & Sabbaths, and a-
gainst

gainst Prophaness & Immorality. The humble zealous Magistrate & Christian were laudably exhibited in Him.

In his Youth he saw the Point at Jamaica sink down in a Moment into the Sea, and was himself drawn out of the bailing Waters by a gracious Providence, which meant to return Him for a Blessing & Honour to his Country. The saving Impressions of that awful Day never wore off, but in the Sanctity of his Life and in the Gravity of his Face, there was always a ray of Moses on Him.

GOD grant that you, Sir, may serve CHRIST & Souls in the Work of the Ministry, with like Integrity & Fervency, as your Father did (thro' Grace) in his Station: And that your Days & Usefulness may be more than his were, by the Will of GOD: And that all his Prayers may come upon his Family, upon the Town, and upon all the Churches of CHRIST.

As to the following Discourse, the Method I have gone into is I think new upon the Subject, and brings new light & force with it. I had another Sermon to have bro't on it, the general Heads of which are just hinted at. By this means it swells beyond the bulk of a Sermon.

I am

Sir,

Your Brother & Servant in the
Ministry of CHRIST,

The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine

OF THE

Resurrection.

Acts xxvi. 8.

W H Y should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that G O D should raise the Dead.



TH E Apostle *Paul* is here answering for himself before King *Agrippa*. He answers with a great readiness and courage, with much decency & respect, and with a great deal of strength and force. “ *Agrippa* being a Proselyte of the Jewish Religion, had a much more perfect understanding of the Principles and Doctrines thereof than the other Roman Governours had. It was the more pleasing therefore to the Apostle to answer before him. He tells him that he stood accused of the Jews, and was judged by them for the Hope of the Promise made of G O D unto the Fathers ; that Hope and Promise which
all

1 The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine

all the pious in the Tribes of Israel were looking and waiting for: *Ver. 6, 7.* No doubt but King Agrippa knew him to mean the Promise and Hope of the MESSIAH. Paul believed Him to be already come, and that JESUS was He. The Jews had crucified Him, the Apostle preach'd Him that He was risen from the dead, and that He had appeared unto him on his way to Damascus. The Jews therefore sought the Life of St. Paul. He pleads the unreasonableness, the injustice and wickedness of this. The risen and ascended JESUS had shewn Himself to Him from Heaven, and spoken to him, and sent him to preach HIM, and the Resurrection to eternal Life by Faith in Him. *Ver. 12, --- 19.* He was not disobedient to the heavenly Vision. This was all the Crime that the Jews had to accuse him of. Agrippa believ'd the two Doctrines for which Paul suffer'd, both that of a Messiah and also that of the Resurrection of the dead: Only Paul preach'd Him already come, and that JESUS was He; whom the Jews had lately taken and with wicked hands had slain; and this they could not bear.

BUT while the Apostle was beginning this his Defence, which was of great propriety and force with King Agrippa, it is not unlikely that Festus and others in the Court who were Gentiles, might begin to smile, as the Armenians had sometimes mock'd him for speaking of the Resurrection of the dead. This, as Mr. Henry on the place thinks, might occasion the sudden and abrupt Query of the Apostle in the words of my Text, *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that GOD should raise the dead?*

HE plainly saw that it appeared so to Festus, and to many that were present: He stop'd short therefore and gravely ask'd them, *Why?* He stood ready to answer their Objections, if they had any to make. He could not readily think what Reasons of any force, they could produce against the Doctrine of the Resurrection. He in effect challenged a Dispute with any one upon this head. He doubts not but he can easily silence the Sadducee, and give a Reason for his Faith in this great Article.

It were incredible indeed that the Dead should raise themselves, or that any created finite Power should raise them, but why should it be tho't a thing incredible that GOD, the GOD of infinite Knowledge and Power, should raise them? Is any thing too hard for Him? If He can will it, we are sure he can do it. --- We must prove it to be a thing beyond the Power of God; or that it is inconsistent with his *Wisdom, Goodness and Justice*; or that God has *never said* it; before we can pretend it to be a thing *Incredible*.

DOCT. *IT ought not to be tho't a thing incredible that GOD should raise the Dead.*

By GOD's raising the dead we understand and mean,
1. His restoring the dead Bodies of Men, after they have seen corruption; whether on Land or Sea, into a form and fitness to receive again the living Soul; and to be animated by it. 2. His uniting the Soul to the Body thus prepared and fitted for it. 3. His doing this by *all* the Dead at the last Day; both the just and unjust ||. 4. Not to live this animal, sensitive and earthly life again, but for a spiritual and incorruptible state. More especially we mean and believe, that the Bodies of the *Righteous* shall be changed, and fitted for the Inheritance of *Light and Glory* in Heaven *.

We own this raising of the dead to be a very *wonderful* thing, like the other admirable & unsearchable Works of GOD. But this is no reason why it should be tho't incredible; for many, *O Lord my GOD! are thy wonderful Works; and thy Tho'ts which are to us-ward*, Psalm 40. 15. The Resurrection of the Dead will be the finishing and crowning Work.

To be sure the Work of GOD must be *honourable and glorious*, worthy of his infinite Perfections. If the Resurrection of the Dead be not *such*, let it be tho't a thing *incredible*. We may put all upon this issue.

[Acts xxiv. 15. John v. 29. * 1 Cor. xv. 50 — 54.

4 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

I will therefore here begin my *Argument*, and considering what GOD is *in Himself*, and what He is to *Us*, I doubt not to prove and manifest, "That it should not be tho't a thing incredible by us, that GOD should raise the Dead."

First then I shall argue from some of GOD's glorious *Perfections*; and *Secondly* from his glorious *Relations* to us.

I. I shall argue from the *Divine ATTRIBUTES and PERFECTIONS*.

AND here,

1. It cannot be thought a thing *incredible* that GOD should raise the Dead, if we consider the *Power of GOD* which is infinite, and can easily do every thing that he can *will* to do: that is to say, whatsoever is wise and good and just, and fit to be done.

THE POWER of GOD is the first thing that should come into Consideration with us in this *Argument*, as our LORD told the *Sadduces*, when they came to Him with their profound *quibble* against the Doctrine of the Resurrection; Matth. 22. 29. *Ye do err, not knowing the Scripture and the Power of GOD*. Surely it cannot be thought a thing beyond the compass of infinite *Power*, to raise all the dead out of their Graves in a moment of time.

ON the one hand it must be owned that it requires the *infinite Power* of GOD to raise the dead. Who can do it but GOD only. The same Almighty Power that form'd the Body of Man at first out of the Earth, is necessary to raise it thence at the last day. *Elijah* therefore cried to the LORD GOD, when he saw the Son of the Widow dead, "O Lord my God! I pray Thee let the Soul of this Child come into him again: And the LORD heard the voice of *Elijah*, 1 Kings 17. 21. And the Woman answered him wisely, when he said to her, "See thy Son liveth!" "Now I know that thou art a Man of GOD. Who but GOD cou'd do this great thing for her? The eternal Power and Godhead of CHRIST was seen at the Grave of *Lazarus*, when he commanded and

and the dead came forth. So also when he stop'd the Bier, whereon the only Son of the Widow lay, and said, "Young Man, I say unto thee, Arise. This was as became the Only Begotten of the FATHER, Lord of Life and Death; according to the working of his mighty Power, whereby He is able to subdue even all things to Himself.

BUT as it truly calls for the infinite Power of God to raise the dead, so it must be very easy to that Power; for all things possible are alike easy to infinite Power. It is as easy to God to make a World as to make a Fly: as easy to do every thing as to do any one thing.

FOR what is God's Power? "Power in God is that Perfection, whereby he is able to do every thing that he can will to be done, in an instant, by his bare willing it to be; without labour or difficulty, without opposition or resistance, without improvement or decay of Power: for God never was, nor can be, more or less powerful than He is*." This is a plain and true Account of the wondrous Power of God. Stand still, O Man! and consider it: and then say, Why it should be tho't a thing incredible that God should raise the Dead.

CANNOT that POWER do this, which by a single Word created the Heavens and the Earth? and filled the one with Hosts of Angels, and made Man an imbodied Spirit on the other! That Power which in the beginning of our time changed a piece of moist Clay into such a Body of flesh and blood as Man's is, and then put into it a living Soul, which can think, and see, and speak and move as we do! Can't it raise this Body out of the Dust again, with infinite Ease, when it pleases? That Power which forms us in the Womb, and holds our Soul in Life, and to that end governs all the motions of the heavenly Bodies from year to year, for the producing all the Fruits of the Earth for our sustenance; can't it raise us from the dead at the last Day?

* The learned Dr Thomas Burnet, his Chain of Consequences.

6 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

VERILY it is easier to GOD to raise all the Dead, than it is to us to move a Finger or to speak a Word. Infinite Power can do the greatest things with infinitely more ease than we can do the least thing. Labour and Pain belong to Creatures, I may say to Sinners; but far be it from the ALMIGHTY. Things above the Power of Nature, or beside the Course of it, or contrary thereto, are as possible and easy to GOD as the common & stated way thereof is. It was as easy to GOD to preserve the *three Worthies* in the midst of the fiery Furnace, as if they had been in the common Air. He who kept the Flame from scorching their Clothes, could as easily have suffered it to have consumed their Bodies to ashes one minute, and the next have rais'd them to life again.

IN short, Were there indeed such a *Valley of dry Bones* before us, as that which the Prophet saw, *Ezek. 37. 2.* and were it ask'd us ---- "*Son of Man, can they live? can they come bone to his bone? and can flesh and sinews come upon them? that they should stand up a whole Army of them!*" We must needs answer ---- *Yes LORD!* if thou wilt it, and dost but say the Word.

THERE is no other limit to the Power of GOD but his Will, and the Rule of his blessed Will is his Wisdom, Goodness and Holiness. If these then do not forbid his willing the Resurrection of the dead, He is able and ready to do it. If it be wise, holy and good to do it, he can and will do it. I go on therefore to say,

2. IF we consider the *Knowledge & Wisdom of GOD*, it cannot be tho't a thing incredible that He should raise the dead.

AND here again it must be own'd that the thing calls for infinite *Understanding*, and must be done for Ends infinitely *wise*. He must be *perfect in Knowledge*, that does this. And a thing of such *Moment* to a World of Beings, rational and immortal, must be the counsel and product of the same infinite Wisdom, wherein God has made all things.

BUT
LUT

BUT then to such Knowledge and Wisdom the thing is not only possible, but easy. *Wisdom and Strength is GOD's: He is wise in heart and mighty in strength.* GOD knows where all the dead Bodies of Men are, and to which body every particle of matter belongs, whether of Air, Water or Earth into which they are resolved. And he must needs know how to gather them all together in an instant of time. And much less can He be ignorant which *Spirit* belongs to which *Body*, or how to bring and joyn them together, in such manner as shall be indissoluble. He has not eyes of flesh, neither seeth He as Man seeth; But known unto GOD is all his Work from the beginning to the end; and his eyes are in every place beholding the evil and the good. Such Knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high, and we cannot attain to it. Whither can we go from his Spirit? and whither shall we fly from his Presence? If our *Spirits* ascend up to Heaven, He is there, as in his Dwelling-place; If our *Bodies* make there bed in the Deeps of the earth or of the sea; behold He is there! And there shall his right Hand hold both the one and the other.

CONSIDER the *Knowledge* that form'd Mans Body out of the Earth, and that still fashions it in the Womb; and say, if it be not sufficient to raise them from the dead. The darkness of the Grave is not greater than that of the Womb; Why then should it be tho't a thing incredible for GOD to restore that Body from the one, which he once fashioned in the other in such wondrous manner? Hear the *Psalmist* sing of his Formation in the Womb; *Psal. 139. 13 --- 17.* and say, "When we are dead and our bodies are laid in their graves, will our *substance* be any more *hid* from God, than when we were *made in secret*? Or in the Resurrection of our Bodies, shall we not be again made *in secret*, and *curiously wro't* again *in the lower parts of the Earth*? and will not the *Thoughts of G O D* be alike *precious* to us the second time?

TRULY it requires no more knowledge to recover our Bodies from their dissolution, than it did to bring them out of Seeds or *Stamina*, which were less than the least dust or sand that ever our eyes beheld.

SHALL

8 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

SHALL we go on then and ask, If there is any reason for us to think it disagreeable to the *Wisdom* of God to raise the dead? "As the *Knowledge* of God is the most exquisite Perception of things, without the mediation of material Organs or Senses; so his *Wisdom* proposes every high and worthy End, glorious to Himself and for the good of his Creatures, and compasses them with the greatest ease, by the most proper means, in the best time. "And as "God perfectly knows all things possible to be, and "that actually shall or will be, all at once, in one entire "view of them; so He can never be mistaken in his End, "nor in the means, manner or season of pursuing it ||.

LET us think then, if there may not be wise & great *Ends*, worthy of the Great *G O D*, in the Resurrection of these our Bodies? May not the Wisdom Power and Goodness of God be glorified herein, as much as in their Formation and present Preservation? Or why may not the Mercy or Justice of God be glorified in the restoration of this Flesh from the pit of corruption? If our Bodies are in themselves an exquisite piece of divine Workmanship, why should they be lost for ever? If they were at first made for Life and Immortality, why should they not be recovered thereunto? Why should not a *Sample* of them, like the pot of incorruptible *Manna*, and like the dry stick of *Aaron* that budded, be laid up within the *Vail*, in the Holy of Holies, to the eternal praise and glory of God? Truly such will be the glorified Bodies of the *Just* in Heaven to all Eternity. And the admirable Wisdom of God, the depth of the riches of his Knowledge and Grace, appears evidently in such a reservation of them unto eternal Glories; that he may be for ever magnified in them. Who dare deny *these* to be *Ends* and *Reasons* worthy of divine *Wisdom* in the Resurrection of the dead?

3. IF we consider the infinite *Goodness* of *G O D*, why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?

I will suppose and take for granted, that *G O D* is *Good* to all, and that his tender *Mercies* are over all his

|| Dr. Tho. Burnet.

Works;

Works; and that He has had eternal Purposes of Grace to a number of the fallen Children of Men. Let any of them then say, why the Doctrine of the *Resurrection* is not worthy of God's *Goodness*. And if it be worthy of a good GOD to raise the dead, why should it be tho't a thing incredible?

MAY not the blessed God in his great Goodness be supposed to have a desire to the work of his hands? as is said in the Book of *Job*. That is, to recover our Bodies out of the ruine which Sin has brought upon them. And especially when this shall be an Act of special Favour and saving Mercy to an Elect number, whom He has foreknown and predestinated to eternal Life! Why should not God be thus rich in Mercy to the Objects and Vessels of his special Grace, in bringing them to Glory by *JESUS CHRIST* his Son? Will it not be to the praise of the glory of his Grace? Let our Hearts and Consciences say if it will not, and why it will not.

"GOODNESS in GOD (says the learned *Author* before cited) is his gracious and unchangeable Disposition to do Good to his Creatures, according to their several Natures and Capacities, in such manner and degree as they can receive from Him; as there is occasion, and as the circumstances of things require; as his Wisdom sees most for his own Glory and their Happiness." Apply *this* now to the Doctrine of the *Resurrection* of the dead: Does it not imply a gracious Disposition & Will in God to do Good to us when we have bro't Death upon our selves? even to recover us to Life and Blessedness in such manner and degree as our Nature is capable of; and as the occasion and circumstances of our fallen state do require?

SUPPOSE it were left to us to ask of God, what he should do for us in this state of Mortality which Sin has brought us into; should we not be ready to say----"LORD that I might not *die*! or that I might *rise* again, and recover Life and Immortality, Incorruption and Glory, my original happiness and honour. I appeal to the common sense and reason of Mankind, if this is not such a Favour

10 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

as we need from a good God, and must needs account his great Goodness to us if it be attainable.

HEAR how *Job* speaks of it, Chap. 14. ver. 12,---13. *So man lieth down and riseth not till the Heavens be no more, they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me in secret, until thy wrath be past! that thou wouldest appoint a set time and remember me! If a man die shall he live again? All the Days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call and I will answer thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands. Job* is understood to speak here of the *Resurrection of the Body*, and he speaks of it as an Act of admirable Favour to Man, which he must needs desire if he might have his request. GOD keeps the bodies of his Saints till the last Day, when as to them every sign of his wrath shall be past for evermore; the last enemy *Death* being slain and abolished.

TILL then the Goodness of GOD to his Elect in CHRIST is not compleated and perfected. If GOD please to recover a number of the dying children of *Adam* to their original Life, Perfection and Felicity, it must be by a Resurrection. If GOD will be good to Believers in CHRIST, to the utmost that their Nature is capable of, he must raise them from the dead. For the happiness of Humane Nature requires the perfection of all the Faculties of Man, both as to soul and body. But how should this be ever attained, unless *this Corruptible do one day put on Incorruption, and this Mortal Immortality?*

THIS I take to amount to a *Demonstration* of the necessity of a *Resurrection* from the Doctrine of Grace and Goodness to fallen Man. The glory of this Goodness very much lies in the promise of a Resurrection.

WHY then should it be tho't a thing incredible? Is not GOD full of Goodness to his Creatures? and will not this be an act of rich Goodness to them? even as much, if not more, than to give us Life at first! let the Heart and Conscience of every Sinner speak.

AND

AND thus speaks the *Scripture*. My Context calls it the *Promise of GOD* unto the Fathers, and their *Hope*. And the Apostle calls it a *lively Hope*; to which we are begotten by the Resurrection of *JESUS CHRIST*.

JOB speaks of it as a high Instance of divine Grace; "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and tho' after my skin worms destroy this Body, yet in my flesh I shall see *GOD*. *David* says, "Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth, my flesh also shall rest in Hope. *Isaiah* sang of it, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they come; Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust. What shall they sing of? why of the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God; the three Topicks from which I have been arguing why it ought not to be tho't a thing incredible that God should raise the Dead. To be sure the Power of God is able to raise them; and the Wisdom of God may be for ever illustrious in it, carrying on the same eternal Design in the Resurrection of the body, which He had in the Formation of it at first: and then the Goodness and Grace of God is the special thing that shines forth in the Resurrection, which is the Redemption of the Body.

So that the only Difficulty remaining is, Whether the Justice and Holiness of *G O D* will not oppose the Resurrection of the Flesh, and render it a thing incongruous and incredible. This has required the Death of the Body, and inflicted Death upon it; and can it ever be reconciled to its Resurrection? or be glorified in it?

IN answer to this Doubt I proceed from the light of *Scripture*, the Revelation of God's Holiness & Goodness to Man in a blessed and perfect Agreement, to add

4. If we consider the infinite Holiness and Justice of *G O D*, yet it is not a thing at all incredible that God should raise the Dead.

If any thing would make it incredible it is this: But the Gospel has given Light in this sacred darkness, bringing Life and Immortality to Light in such a way as makes highly for the glory of God's Justice. God that is Holy is sanctified in Righteousness, while we have Hope to-
ward

ward God that there shall be a Resurrection both of the Just and Unjust.

IT is true that *Death* came upon Man by *Sin* and for *Sin*. And God is righteous in judging thus. It is a just and terrible Punishment of *Sin*, and must have remained for ever, if, *CHRIST* the SON of the HIGHEST, according to an eternal Counsel of Peace between *Him* and the FATHER, for our Redemption from *Sin* and *Death*, had not come and died and born the Curse of the Law, and therein made a most honourable Amends, in a full Satisfaction to the Justice of God and his violated Law: And having done this, He is himself risen from the dead, and has received power from God to raise all the dead out of their Graves at the last Day, to judge and punish the wicked, and cast *death and hell into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone*; and also to crown the righteous with eternal Life & Glory.

THUS the Holiness of God being satisfied in the death of *CHRIST*, who made his Soul an offering for *Sin*, God can be just and holy and raise up Belivers in *Jesus* to immortal Bliss.

AND other Foundation can no man lay for the Resurrection of the dead, but the dying and rising of the LORD *JESUS*. That as by *Man* came *Death*; by *Man* also the Resurrection of the dead; that, as in *Adam* all die, so in *CHRIST* should all be made alive, 1 Cor. 15. Chap.

Now it is not at all incredible that the HOLY ONE should raise the dead, when his own SON has taken the Sinners Nature, and died therein and rose again. As the Apostle argues, "This is the Gospel which ye have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved unless ye have believed in vain: For I have delivered unto you, how *CHRIST* died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried and ROSE AGAIN the third day according to the Scriptures. So we preach and so ye believed. Now if *CHRIST* be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no Resurrection of the dead? For then *CHRIST* is not risen, and your Faith is vain, you are yet in your sins; and they

they which are fallen asleep in CHRIST are perished. But now is CHRIST risen from the dead and become the First-fruits of them that sleep.

THE Apostles Argument here is plainly this, That on the supposition of CHRIST's dying and rising as the Sinners Surety and in his place, there is no room left for us to question the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead: But that if you take away this ground of the Faith and Hope of Christians, there is no other sufficient Reason why it should be tho't a thing credible. For the Justice of God and the Curse of the Law, had laid such a stone at the door of our Sepulchres as no Angel in Heaven could have roll'd away: But the SON of GOD is come, and has taken away the stone, and the dead in CHRIST may go forth; yea and must come forth to the glory of GOD's Justice. CHRIST is the Power of GOD and the Wisdom of GOD in our Resurrection. Both the power and wisdom and goodness of GOD are glorified in it, because his Holiness is so. This, the only let, is taken out of the way.

HENCE we read, Gal. 3. 12. *CHRIST has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, by being made a Curse for us. He has redeemed our Bodies from death and the grave, by suffering the pains of Death and rising from the Grave. Death was the Curse, and he bare and took it away. So is bro't to pass the saying, "Death is swallowed up in Victory! Mortality in Life! O death, I will be thy plague! O grave, I will be thy destruction. It is CHRIST that died, yea rather who is risen again.*

AND all this is but the fulfilment and accomplishment of the first Promise of a Redeemer and of a Redemption for fallen Man. When the Serpent had brought Death upon him for his Sin, GOD curs'd him and told him there should come a glorious SEED of that very Woman whom he had deceived, whose heel should be bruised by him, but thereby his own Head should be broken. In this first Promise we have JESUS and the Resurrection. JESUS dying and breaking the Serpent's head. Now the Head of the Serpent is not broken if the dead rise not; if death which he bro't upon us be not abolished. But if

14. *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

the dead rise by the power, holiness and righteousness of this *Seed of the Woman*, then is the Devils head broken, his work destroyed. And the Holiness of God is more glorified by the righteous Life, the meritorious Death, and glorious Resurrection of the Son of God in our nature; than it would have been if Man had never died. In the punishment of Sin, Man's dying, Justice is glorified; but in CHRIST's satisfying for sin and raising the dead, Justice is more glorified. *Grace reigns, thro' Righteousness, unto eternal Life, by JESUS CHRIST our LORD.*

AND thus we see that when we have considered the *Holiness* and *Justice* of God in their utmost Glory, they are so far from making it incredible that God should raise the dead, that they declare aloud and strongly for it. Justice has nothing to say, why the dead should not rise. And it will be glorified eternally, in the resurrection of some to *everlasting Life*, and in the resurrection of others to *eternal Damnation*. In the one God is just to CHRIST, and the Justifier of Believers in him; in the other his flaming Vengeance rests on Body and Soul together. Justice is magnified both in the glorified Vessels of *Mercy*, and on the *Vessels of Wrath fitted for destruction*.

I shall add but one word more under the first general Head,

5. IF we consider the *Immensity, Omnipresence and Incomprehensibleness* of GOD, why should it be tho't a thing incredible that He should raise the Dead?

THE *infinite GOD* knows and wills and does infinitely, beyond all that we can think or conceive. GOD is an *Immense Spirit*, filling Heaven and Earth, every where present at all times, and always at work, with infinite ease, in everlasting rest and pleasure. HE is the first and the last. HE filleth all in all. Whither can we go from his SPIRIT? and whither can we fly from his Presence? Who then shall set bounds to his working, so much as in Tho't? questioning, "Can He do this or that?"

FOR instance, The dissolved Bodies of the dead are to be sure scatter'd over the whole Earth and Sea, Land and Waters;

Waters ; and no small part of the Dead is evaporated into Air, drawn up by the heat of the Sun ; and has been carried about in the wide Region of Clouds and Winds ; and has fallen and been exhal'd again ; the God of Nature only knows how and where. But what then ! Doth this at all render it incredible that God should raise these *same* Bodies again ? No, not at all. It is Answer eno', "*GOD is Infinite : He is Immense : He knows all his Work from the beginning to the end : He looks to the end of the whole Heaven : He ever always sees every end of the Earth : His Eyes are evermore in every place, beholding the evil and the good : There is not any Creature that is not manifest in his sight : He has made it even impossible in nature that any one Atom of this Earth, and in the Atmosphere about it should be lost : (The one single Law of the Gravitation of Bodies toward their Centre forbids and prevents it :) And every Atom of every human Body, (that has been, is or shall be) is distinctly known to his infinite Mind. How then can it be tho't a thing incredible that this Immense BEING should raise all the Dead, in an Instant of time, by a Word of his power ?*

As the *Scriptures* teach us of God "*He declareth the former things, (for instance, How the Body of Man was at first made by Him) and He sheweth what must be hereafter : (for instance, How he will raise our fallen Bodies at the last Day :) He declares the End from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. HIS Eyes are not eyes of flesh, nor are his Days like the days of man. HIS goings forth have been from everlasting, and to everlasting He is the same. HE is the beginning and he is the ending ; and he will finish his own working ; of which no Creature sees the End, or knows the manner. HE is, & He was, & He is to come. To whom shall we liken Him ? or what likeness shall we compare to Him ? Or are there any works like unto his Works ? How much less shall He be tho't such an one as our selves ! His ways are not as our ways, nor his tho'ts as our tho'ts ! but as the Heavens are above the Earth so are his Ways and Tho'ts above ours. It is HE that sitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and upon that of the Universe, in comparison whereof this is but a single point, and the Inhabitants of the Earth are as Grasshoppers, and the People,*

16 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

People of other Worlds are no more before Him. *Behold, the Nations are but as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the dust of the ballance; they are reputed as nothing before Him, and are counted to Him as less than nothing and vanity!*"

IF then this GREAT GOD has told us that He will raise the Dead, shall we think it a thing incredible? Why, what do we make of HIM? *whither do our tho'ts carry us away?* We forget his Greatness and Unsearchable Works! *Behold, He is great and we know Him not! Can we by searching find Him out? Can we find out the ALMIGHTY unto perfection?* And who shall say to Him, what He can do and what He will do?

SOME things indeed we know the perfect and blessed GOD cannot do. *He cannot lie.* And therefore we are sure He will raise the Dead. He cannot do any thing unworthy of his glorious Perfections. But to raise the dead to Judgment, and his Saints to Glory, is every way worthy of all his Perfections, as we have seen.

THERE is nothing contrary to Reason, no not in the least, in the Scripture-doctrine of the Resurrection; tho' it be far above the Comprehension of our Reason, as are the other wondrous Works of GOD, which our eyes have seen and do see. *GOD has done great things past finding out, and Wonders beyond number, and He will do more. As thou knowest not the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the Works of GOD, who maketh all.*

[*Here this Discourse may be divided.*]

II. ~~Having~~ **H**AVING thus argued from the *Divine Attributes and Perfections*, I come now to consider **G O D** in his glorious **RELATIONS** to us ; as the **LORD** our *Creator, Preserver, Redeemer and Sanctifier* : And why should it be tho't a thing *incredible* that He should raise us from the dead ?

LET us consider, What these Bodies of ours are to God, and what He is to them ; and it is highly credible that He will one day restore them from the Grave. It cannot be tho't but that the **LORD** *will be for the Body*, even so far as this comes to ; when we consider that the Body is the *work* of his Hand, the *care* of his Providence, an instrument of his *Glory*, an *object* of redeeming Love, and a *subject* of sanctifying Grace.

I. IF we consider the Great **G O D** as the **CREATOR** of the *Body*, and what a noble and superior part of the Divine Workmanship the Body of Man is, why should it seem a thing incredible that God should have this desire to the Work of his Hand ?

AMONG all the rich variety of the living Creatures upon the Earth, counting them one by one, after their kind, there is none to be compared with the Body of *Man*, for beauty and elegance. Those are suited to the sensitive Soul and Life only, *This* to the rational Mind and Spirit. And agreeably the like Solemnity doth not appear in the account of the Creation of the one, as of the other. Of the one it is only said, " *Let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after his kind, and it was so* : But when the Formation of Man's Body came on, the Style greatly changes and riles, " *And G O D said, Let US make Man in our Image, after our likeness ; and let him have Dominion, &c.* And tho' the Image and Likeness of God here doth not refer to his bodily Form, but to the living Spirit of Man created after God in Knowledge, Holiness and Immortality ; yet even in the formation of our Body the HOLY GHOST would represent to us something more particular

particular and *angst*, than in the production of the moving Creatures, void of Reason and Immortality. See Gen. 2. 7. *And the LORD GOD formed Man, i. e. his Body, of the Dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of Life; and Man became a living Soul.* Not that God took any more time, or pains, or care to produce or fashion the Body of Man, than that of the Beasts; but it is spoken after our manner and for our sake, to represent unto us something much more perfect, exact, curious, elegant and noble in the Form of Man's Body, than in the other Creatures. And we see there is so. *Os homini sublime dedit.* There is something much more *sublime* in the Face and Eye and erect Figure of *Man*, than is to be seen in the Cattle that are put under his Feet.

AND is it no Argument with us why it should please God one day with great Solemnity to quicken these our mortal Bodies, and raise them out of Earth again, after they are fallen into it? He who has done so much in making them of the Clay, is it unworthy of his Wisdom, Power and Goodness to recover them from the dust? Is not the Body as capable and worthy of the one as of the other? And for his Pleasure and Glory, why shall he not raise the Body which He once created? This his Work is *honourable and glorious*, and he has surely made it to be seen and *remembered* for ever. So the *Glory of the LORD shall endure for ever, the LORD shall rejoice in his Work.*

BUT let us consider further, that the Body of Man was made by God for a rational, religious & immortal *Spirit* to dwell in; and to serve, worship, obey, honour and glorify God in; and to enjoy Him in for ever. Such a Palace and Temple for God was the Body of Man at first made: The Flesh was suited to such a holy Mind and Soul, made *but a little lower than the Angels* of Heaven; with *Eyes* to see God in his visible Works, with a *Mouth* to speak of Him and to Him, *to talk of all his wondrous Works*; with *Ears* to hear one another do so, and with *Hands* to work and write for his glory, and for our own and others benefit. And suppose now that God the MAKER of these Bodies has seen a way, since they

they became mortal, to recover them in any measure to *these excellent Ends* of their Creation, and to their first Use and Service; may it not highly become his Wisdom, Power and Mercy to restore them perfectly, to his everlasting Honour and Glory from them? Surely it is highly credible that the wise and good CREATOR will so restore them.

MOREOVER, Doth not the Body belong to *Man*? is it not a constituent part of Man? Did GOD create Man without a Body? and is not the human Soul made to animate a Body? Why then should it not please the CREATOR to bring Soul and Body again together?

FINALLY, We read of a *Deliverance of the Creature from the bondage of Corruption*. Rom. 8. 21. That is, from the *Curse* which Man's Sin has brought upon the Earth, and all the Creatures on it. And this is very agreeable to the Wisdom and Goodness of the CREATOR, not to leave such a part of his Creation always under the Curse. And if the *inferior Creature* shall find Deliverance, shall not *Man's Body*? At least, shall the Bodies of God's *Elect* remain for ever in the bondage of Corruption? Are not *these much better* than they? And are they not the more special Care of a Heavenly FATHER? We therefore read, *that the earnest Expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of GOD, at the Redemption of our Body*. The Resurrection of the Just is properly and literally the Redemption of their Body, which perfectly frees them from every mark and sign of Sin. In the Day of this glorious *Liberty of the Sons of GOD* the Curse shall be taken off from *the Creature* and it shall be "restored to the excellent primitive State of it's Creation. Say how this harmonizes with the account given us of the *Original State* of Man. Before his Fall there was no *Curse* upon the Creatures, but the CREATOR's Blessing rested upon him and them. He was a *Son of GOD*, in Innocence and Holiness, and in an happy *Paradise*. And at the Resurrection, the manifestation of *the Sons of GOD*, the Earth shall regain it's *paradisaic* face and state, and the Creatures on it their first state.

20 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

Now is not all this very agreeable to the Relation wherein God stands to Man and to the Creatures, as their great CREATOR ! He knows how to value his own Workmanship, and will recover it to his own Praise and Glory.

2. IF we consider the LORD GOD as the PRESERVER of Man, why should it be tho't incredible that He should raise the Dead :

THE same GOD is the Creator and Preserver of Man and of all Creatures *. The glorious Providence of GOD takes a tender Care of our Bodies. It does so in the Womb : the SPIRIT OF GOD makes us, and his Inspiration gives us Life. His eyes see our substance, yet imperfect, and his Thoughts toward us are exceeding precious, in the fashioning all our Members. In our Birth || GOD takes us out of the womb. He takes the kind Office to Himself and directs us to ascribe it to Him. In our helpless Infancy the same good Providence nurses and cherishes us ; gives us the Blessing of the Breast, and our Mothers tender Arms and Love. *Thou didst make me hope upon my Mother's breast, Thou art my GOD from my Mother's belly. And unto old Age it is HE, unto hoary hairs he carries. HE is our life and the length of our days.* He feeds, and clothes, and heals, and keepeth all our bones. This is a part of God's daily care of us in these mortal Bodies. *In HIM we live and move and have our being.*

AND can it be tho't a thing incredible that the God who takes such a gracious and constant Care of us in these Insul mortal Bodies, should one day raise them from the dead, and clothe an elect number of them, belonging to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, with immortal Glories ? No surely. But it is very credible that after all the fatherly care which He takes of this Flesh and Blood now, he will not let it be utterly lost in the common dust, for ever ; but will in due season send forth his SPIRIT and create it again, as he renews the face of the Earth by quickening the Seeds which are sown and die in it †. So all the Bones

* Job vii. 20. Psal. xxxvi. 6. || Psal. xxii. 9, † 1 Cor. xv. 36. which

which God is so good to now, shall again flourish as the Herb ||, and praise God, saying, *Who is a GOD like unto thee?*

LET me use here the words of God to the Prophet Ezekiel *, and methinks they will bear to be thus turned: *"Son of man, These bones are the whole House of Israel; (the Care of Israel's GOD)." Behold they say, Our bones are dried, our Hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts: (Truly so it looks as to the Body when it is laid in the Grave). "Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the LORD GOD; Behold O my People, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of them; and bring you to Life everlasting.*

SURELY the God of his Peoples Life here, will do this for their Bodies at the last day. Their Reservation unto Glory agrees well to their present Preservation.

3. If we consider God as the REDEEMER and SANCTIFIER of the Bodies of an *Elect Number* of the Children of Men, it must needs be tho't that He will raise them from the dead one day.

THERE is a Remnant according to the Election of Grace, whom God has chosen unto salvation by JESUS CHRIST, thro' sanctification of the SPIRIT, 1 Pet. 1. 2. He has redeemed them Soul & Body by the Blood of CHRIST, and they are sanctified in CHRIST JESUS. Now it is a thing incredible that the Holy GOD should not raise up These by JESUS, and bring them with Him. Is it credible that God should give his SON to redeem us, and his SPIRIT to dwell in us, and yet never quicken our dead Bodies?

1. CONSIDER the Lord GOD as the REDEEMER of the Body. He is so by his SON. CHRIST is the Redeemer of the Body. He has bought it with his own Blood. So the HOLY GHOST teaches us, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *Ye are bought with a Price, therefore glorify GOD with your BODIES*

22 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

and with your Spirits which are his. Both are bought, both are his, and He is to be glorified in both. It is not the Soul only, but the Body also that is ransomed and purchased. *This* therefore is to be holy to the LORD, as a redeemed thing, as well as the Spirit.

AND thus it has been understood from the days of Job, that the Redemption of Man extended to his Body, and to the Recovery of it from the dust of Death. Job 19. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth, and tho' after my skin worms shall destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh I shall see GOD; whom I shall see for my self, and my eyes shall behold Him, and not another:* That is, In this same Body which you now see thus changed and as it were rotting alive.

WE therefore learn this of Job, not to speak of a Redeemer and not think of a Resurrection of the Flesh. The one implies the other. Doth my Redeemer live? before then tho' Worms destroy this Body, yet it shall be raised again. How else (says Job) were He my Redeemer? or how were I redeemed? if in this Flesh I do not see God? and see Him as my God? see Him for my self, This is the ancient and true sense of Redemption.

THE REDEEMER was thus revealed to us in the first Promise. The SON OF GOD was to take a Body, being made of the Woman; and in that Body he was to die, and be bruised on the Cross; and so to redeem Man from that Sin and Death which the Devil deceiv'd him into.

WE read therefore of CHRIST's giving Himself a Ransome to God for us, 1 Tim. 2. 6. But from what, and for what, was he given as a Ransome? Why, the Ransom is for our Bodies, as well as for our Souls. It is a price of Deliverance from the power of the Grave, as well as from the chains of Hell. Hosea 13. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the Grave, I will redeem them from Death: O Death, I will be thy plague! O Grave, I will be thy destruction.*

A Ransom for fallen Man must be from the Curse of the Law. The curse is Death. And the Death of the Body

Body is one part of the curse. There is therefore no true and compleat *Redemption* of Man from the Curse, if his *Body* be not redeemed from *Death*. The *Resurrection* of the *Body* to Life eternal is the proper and true *Redemption* of it. For this end therefore the SON OF GOD took a *Body* of flesh and blood, and suffer'd the pains of death, even the death of the Cross, that he might redeem us from the Curse of the Law, by being made a Curse for us. Gal. 3. 13.

SEE then the harmony of a Resurrection of our bodies, with the Crucifixion of the *Body* of CHRIST. Yea the necessity of a Resurrection for us, upon the Redeemer's dying and bearing the Curse, his rising and bearing it away. So that if we doubt the Resurrection of the *Body*, we must deny the LORD that bought us; we dishonour the Name of our Redeemer, and break in upon the just and true notion of our Redemption. For because we have Bodies to be redeemed from the Grave, therefore CHRIST died and was buried and rose again the third day. After his dead *Body* shall ours come forth.

As credible therefore as that we have a Redeemer, or that there is a Redemption for us; and as sure and as certain as Man is redeemed; so certain it is that GOD will raise the dead. According to what we read, 1 Thes. 4. 14. If we believe that JESUS died and rose again, even so them that sleep in JESUS will GOD bring with Him.

2. IF we consider GOD as the SANCTIFIER of the *Body*, it is highly credible that He will raise the dead. GOD is the Sanctifier of his People. This is the special Office of the HOLY GHOST. He is the Sanctifier both of *Soul* and *Body*. The whole Man is sanctified in Regeneration. And this proves the whole to be redeemed, and predestinated unto eternal Life. 1 Thes. 5. 23. The GOD of Peace sanctify you, wholly; and I pray GOD your whole Spirit, Soul and Body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord JESUS CHRIST.

THAT Sanctification is of the *Body* as well as of the *Soul*, appears from the whole Tenor of the Law & Gospel of CHRIST. Hear how the HOLY GHOST speaks of and to

24 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

to his sanctified Ones: Rom. 6. 12, 13. *Let not Sin reign in your mortal Bodies, that ye should obey it in the Lusts thereof: Neither yield ye your members instruments of unrighteousness unto Sin; but yield your selves unto GOD, and your members instruments of Righteousness unto GOD.* 1 Cor. 6. ult. *Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the HOLY GHOST which is in you? For ye are bought with a Price: therefore glorify GOD in your Body and Spirit, which are GOD's.*

THE Bodies of Believers are used by their sanctified Spirits in the Service of God, unto his Glory. They present unto God their Bodies, a living Sacrifice, which is their reasonable Service, Rom. 12. 1. They thro' the SPIRIT mortify the deeds of the Body, in hope of eternal Life, Rom. 8. 13. They crucify the Flesh with it's Affections and Lusts, that the body of Sin may be destroyed, Rom. 6. 6.

THE Body is also used in the Worship of God, and in doing Good. And if it partake, together with the Soul, in the Works of Holiness, shall it not also in the Life of Glory? Shall the Bodies of the sanctified be thrown away in putrified dust for ever, as if they never had been anointed? had never receiv'd the Unction of the HOLY ONE? Is this credible? Or is it not much more credible as well as Scriptural, "That if the SPIRIT of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He shall also quicken your mortal Body, Rom. 8. 11.

It is as incredible that what God sanctifies & prepares for Glory should come short of it, as that a thing un sanctified should ever enter into Heaven. For Sanctification is the Earnest of the Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession. Eph. 1. 14. It makes meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. It makes the Body a Vessel of Holiness, and shall it not be made a Vessel of Glory.

BELIEVERS worship GOD with their Bodies in holy manner; they labour and work for God with their Bodies, and they suffer for CHRIST in their Bodies; (even unto Martyrdom and the giving their Bodies to the flames) and will not God glorify them in Body & Spirit? Undoubtedly He

He will. They may humbly and confidently say, "De-
stroy, O Death, this Temple, and CHRIST will raise it
up at the last Day.

We read of *Her that is holy in Body*, 1 Cor. 7. 34. and
shall not *her Body* be raised in Glory for the *Holy of*
Holies? We read of *bearing in the Body the dying of*
the LORD JESUS, and of *the Life of JESUS manifested in*
our mortal flesh: 2 Cor. 4. 10. And will not the LORD
JESUS raise that Body to *Life* again? and *fashion it accor-*
ding to his own most glorious Body? What can be more
credible.

AGAIN, We read of bearing in our Bodies the Marks
of the LORD JESUS (the marks of his sufferings as well as
sanctity) and shall not such Bodies bear the marks of his
Glory for ever? Doubt it who can! The Apostle could
not: Phil. 1. 20. *According to my earnest Expectation and*
my Hope, that CHRIST shall be magnified in my Body,
whether it be by Life or by Death. And if CHRIST is
magnified in the Bodies of some, living and dying; it is a
thing incredible that he will not magnify *those Bodies* for
ever and ever. For as the Apostle argues, 1 Cor. 15. 29, 30.
Else what shall they do that are baptised for the dead, if
the dead rise not? Why are they then baptised for the
dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?
What profiteth it me, if the dead rise not, that I have
fought with beasts at Ephesus?

THIS is the Argument, and I think very plain & strong,
from the Redemption and Sanctification of the Body, to
the Resurrection of it.

AND thus we have argued from the glorious Perfections
and Relations of God, that it ought not to seem a thing
incredible to us that God should raise the Dead.

THERE remain yet a number of lesser Reasons and Ar-
guments, which are meet and worthy to be named, and
ought to have their consideration and weight with us.
I shall but name 'em.

WHY

WHY should it be tho't a thing *incredible* with us that God should raise the Dead? When we believe that some *Saints* * have been *translated*, and taken up in *their Bodies* into Heaven. Were *Enoch* and *Elias* better than all the *holy Men of GOD* before or since their day? by no means. Were not *Abraham* and *Moses* and *Elisha* equal to Them in the Kingdom of Grace? The Translation of these *two* teaches us to look for the Resurrection of the rest. They are Instances of *this* Truth, "That the Body of *Man* was at first designed for Heavenly Glory, and that the Bodies of *Saints* are redeemed to it.

WHY, again, should it be tho't a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? when we believe that some *have been raised* from Death to Life †.

WHT? when we believe a *Judgment Day* and the Judgment Seat of *JESUS CHRIST*? that *CHRIST* will come in *his raised Body* to judge all Men! and that the Judgment will be for things *done in the Body*, whether they be good or evil †.

WHT? when we believe *the Spirits of just Men made perfect* in Heaven, and that God is pleas'd to call Himself *their GOD*. Mat. 22. 31, 32.

WHT? when so many *Souls*, made to inform a human *Body* continue so *small* a time in the Body? And *why*? when we see in the Course of *Nature* a kind of *visible* Resurrection every year? 1 Cor. 15. 35, ---38. "Has the *Sun* (says *One*) such a force to raise dead *Seeds*?" and "shall it seem incredible that God should raise dead *Bodies*?"

Lastly, WHY? when we see that the *HOLY GHOST* is pleas'd so often to *allude to a Resurrection*, thereby to illustrate other things unto us, and inforce them on us!

* Gen. v. 24. Heb. xi. 5. 2 Kings ii. 1 Thes. iv. 15.
 † 1 Kings xvii. 22. 2 Kings iv. 33, 35. Mat x. 7.
 Mark v. 41. Luke vii. 14. Joh. xi. 33. † Acts xvii. 31.
 and i. 11. Mat. xxvi. 64. Rev. i. 7. & vii. 14. 2 Cor.
 v. 10. Rev. xx. 13 Heb. xi. 35.

As, the Restoration of the Church from a decay'd & low Estate ||, and the Recovery of Souls from a state of Sin and Wrath *. If no such thing were true in Fact as the Resurrection of the Dead, would the SPIRIT of Grace and Truth lead us into the manifest allusions to and suppositions of it?

AND now I should have gone into some USE and Improvement of this great Doctrine. But this has been abundantly done by many, and my Limits are already exceeded.

1. LET the Sadducee stand silenc'd, ashamed and condemn'd; and let us beware of their *Leven*, which is modern *Deism* & Infidelity; against which my Argument is levell'd from the *Perfections of the DEITY*. Acts 23. 6, 7, 8. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

2. LET Christians take care to live as this Doctrine and Hope would reach us. Live as those that hope for a blessed Resurrection to eternal Life, and as those that believe and fear a dreadful Resurrection of the wicked and impenitent to eternal Damnation. So the Apostle liv'd; Acts 24. 16. *I have Hope toward GOD that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the just & unjust; and herein do I exercise my self to have a Conscience always void of Offence; toward God & Man.* So his Faith wor'd by Works and was seen to be a living and lively Faith. And so he exhorts and admonishes us to live by this Faith; after a long Chapter upon the Resurrection of the Body: "Wherefore my beloved Brethren, (says he) be ye steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the Work of the LORD; for as much as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain in the LORD.

WE ought so to think and speak and act here in the Body, as realizing that we must shortly die and leave the Body to be buried, and go to God in our Spirits to be judged for all things done in the Body. We should so live, converse and worship in these dying Bodies, as those that hope to see and enjoy God, and serve and worship Him forever in them. If our Faith have not this power

|| Psal. lxxi. 20. Psal. lxxxviii. Isa. xxvi. 9. Ezek. xxxvi. 1, 12. * Joh. v. 25. Eph. ii. 1. & vi. 14. Col. iii. 1. and

28 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

and effect, it is *dead* and vain, and we are dead in our Sins, and shall be so for ever. “The Grace of God which has appeared to us bringing Salvation, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the present World; looking for the *blessed Hope* and the glorious appearance of the great God our Saviour; who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all Iniquity, and to purify us to Himself to be a peculiar People zealous of good Works. If we have this *Hope* we shall purify our selves as he is pure; purify our Souls in obeying the Truth.

MORE especially, The Resurrection being of the *Body*, and being to Life and Glory everlasting, it is requisite and necessary that we endeavour a serious *Preservation*, and make a careful *Separation* of our Bodies from defiling and damning *Sin* *. For *this is the Will of GOD* even our *Sanctification*; that every one possess himself in *Sanctity and Honour*: For Corruption cannot inherit Incorruption, and nothing that defileth can enter into Life.

IT is also our reasonable Service to present our *Bodies* a living Sacrifice, in all their parts and powers to be *Instruments of Righteousness to the Glory of GOD* ||. Our *Eyes* should be sacred to God to see Him in his *Works*, even his eternal Power and Godhead, and read his written Will for our Salvation. We must covenant with them, as *Job* did, who hop’d with his bodily Eyes to see *GOD*. We must be *Eyes* also to the blind, as he was, and do it as unto *CHRIST*, who in the great Day will say of it, *Thou did it unto Me*.

OUR *Ears* must be sacred to God, bowed and bored to Him; bow’d to his *Word* and bored *Door*. And we should return to the *LORD JESUS* his own Word, *Mine Ear thou hast opened*.

THE Word of Truth must not depart from our *Lips* but the Law of *Love* and of *Kindness* govern them; even love to God, and kindness to Men. We must use them much in *Prayers* and *Praises* to God from a true Heart.

* Rom. vi. 12. viii. 13. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Col. ii. 13. 1 Thes. iv. 2, 3. 2 Pet. ii. 20. Gal. v. 24. Rev. xxi. 27.
|| Rom. vi. 13, 19. xii. 1, 1 Cor. vi. 20.

and in speaking often *one to another* of Him and of his Works, from his holy Word. So *the Lips of the Righteous feed many*, and *drop as the honey-comb*, while they preach God's Word, assert and defend his Truth, reprove and condemn the Wicked and praise the Godly; while they beseech Sinners to be reconciled to God, and confirm the Godly in his ways; while they plead the Cause of the poor, and eat and drink to the glory of God.

OUR *Hands* should be devoted, active and diligent Instruments of Righteousness to God, ready unto every good Work of Piety and Charity. We must open them to the poor, and reach them forth to the needy; to minister to 'em in sickness, to right 'em under injuries, and succour 'em in dangers; yea we must readily reach them to the help of the very *Beasts* of our Neighbours. We must use the *Pen*, or the *Sword*, or the *Axes* and *Hammers*, the common tools belonging to our several Occupations, as the Service of God calls for them, with a Zeal according to Knowledge, under the Conduct of Justice and Charity.

WE must keep our *Feet* with all diligence, and go up to God's *House*, and tread his *Courts*. We must go *about* doing Good, and be feet to the lame. We must be daily *bowing before the LORD our Maker*, and our knees to the *Name of JESUS*.

BECAUSE we believe the *Resurrection* of the Body, we must therefore serve God with it, in Aversion from and Opposition unto them *whose GOD is their Belly*, *whose Mouths are full of cursing and bitterness*, *their Eyes full of Adultery*, and *their Feet swift to shed Blood*.

Finally, WE must dedicate our Bodies as *living Temples* to GOD, and offer 'em up as *living Sacrifices*. As CHRIST spake of the Temple his Body, so He has said to Believers in Him; *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of GOD? and that the SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you? and the Temple of GOD is HOLY, which Temple ye are:* And again, *For ye are the Temple of the living GOD, as He hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them* *. We must therefore keep our selves pure and clean as a holy

* 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16,

30 *The Credibility of the Christian Doctrine*

Habitation for the SPIRIT OF GOD ; and consider our selves as appropriated by holy *Baptism* to his special & immediate Service, and to his Worship ; accounting it a profane and sacrilegious thing to alienate our selves, in Body or Spirit, from this religious Designation.

AND then, If the Glory and Interest of CHRIST calls for the *offering up* these Bodies, it must be done ; As the *Martyrs* of JESUS have done to the Sword, to Gibbets, to Racks and to the Flames ; *not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a more glorious Resurrection.*

THE *Temple* and the *Sacrifice* go together in the Religion of JESUS, and by the Doctrine of the *Resurrection*. For it is a reasonable and righteous thing, that we be ready to *die* for the Name of the LORD JESUS, when He himself has *died* to obtain Redemption for us, and a glorious Resurrection. So *Isaac* was laid, and lay still, on the *Altar*, like the *Lamb of GOD*, willing to be offered. So the *three Worthies* yielded their *Bodies* to the *Furnace*. So blessed *Paul* joy'd at the Thot of being offer'd on the *sacrifice and service of the Faith*, in that risen JESUS whom he had seen on the way.

AND let me add, There is a gracious *passive* yielding up our *Bodies* to the LORD, in all the Languishments and Pains and Dolours, which it pleases Him in his Sovereignty to exercise some of his Servants with. *Job* bore his, with a singular Devotion, from the Hope of the Resurrection.

IN a word, Our *Christian Baptism* is the solemn separation of our *Bodies* from Sin and Uncleanness, to the Worship and Obedience of CHRIST, in Hope & Expectation of the *Resurrection* of the Just. So the *Apostle* gives us the meaning of our *Baptism*, Rom. 6. That it is significant of our dying to Sin and living to GOD, in Conformity to the dying and rising of the LORD JESUS.

IF CHRIST did not intend to raise the *Bodies* of his *Elect*, and fashion them according to his own most glorious Body, He would not now require the solemn separation of the *Body* to Him. That is, in other words, If there were no *Resurrection* of the *Body*, there would be no *Baptism*.

Baptism. For he is not LORD of the dead, but of the living. Because therefore he requires the *Baptism* of the mortal Body, we know that he will quicken it again. Four times over the Promise is repeated, John 6. 38, 40. *And I will raise him up at the last Day.*

SOME think *this* to be at last the Simple and plain sense of those laboured Words, which have so much exercised the Wits of *Criticks*, *Else what shall they do who are baptized for the Dead?* Why are the Waters of Baptism applied to our *Bodies*, if we do not look for the Resurrection of them? ----- When the *Sadduces* therefore came to the Baptism of *John*, he rebuked and rejected them *as a Generation of Vipers*, that could have no part in the *Holy Washing*.

LET us then from the Doctrine of the Resurrection see our *Christian Obligations* to live to GOD in *these Bodies*; as the Expectants of Life and Immortality thro' the Death and Resurrection of our LORD JESUS CHRIST ||.

AND in the Faith hereof, let us improve every *Sabbath*, every *Sacrament*, and every *Lecture*, as a Sign & Witness to us of the Resurrection of the Just. For being *Signs* and *Means* of present Sanctification to us, both in Soul & Body, so are they of the future Glorification of both.

THE LORD's *Sabbath* is a Rest to the *Body*, for it's Exercise in holy Labours, and a *Type* of it's everlasting Rest in the Vision, Worship and Service of GOD.

THE LORD's *Supper* is an Ordinance for us both in *Body* and Spirit, as also is *Baptism*; and as *Circumcision* and the *Passover* were of old to the People of GOD. If CHRIST had not taken Flesh and Blood, and if we were not both Flesh and Spirit, and to be *holy* in both and *happy* in both, *this* Ordinance had not been appointed to us. Indeed *the Flesh profiteth nothing*; i. e. The meer eating & drinking, without a spiritual discerning of the LORD's Body, and the receiving CHRIST and his Benefits by Faith and with an

|| Rom viii. 10, 11, 12, 13. Phil. iii. 11, --- 14, 20, 21.
Col. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

obedient Heart : But then it is all *Spirit & Life* ; Life to the *Soul* now, and a pledge of Life to the *Body* hereafter, at the second Appearance of **JESUS CHRIST**.

ONCE more, *Fasting* is of the *Body*, and the *Fast* which it sanctifys to the **LORD** is a Sign and Means of Sanctification to us both in *Body* and Spirit ; and therefore we should *Fast* in the belief and hope of the *Resurrection* of the *Flesh*. For assuredly the Person that like aged *Anna* has been *serv- ing CHRIST in his Temple* here, with *Fastings & Prayers*, and *looking for his Redemption* ; shall stand at the last Day before his *Throne*, and *serve* Him day and night in his *Temple above* ; where he shall *hunger no more*, nor *thirst* any more, but **GOD** shall wipe away all *Tears* from his eyes.

Thus every *Season* and *Means* of *Grace* speaks to us, of *entring into Life*, after **CHRIST**, both in *Body* and Spirit, as He is entred for us. They are all *Signs* between **GOD** and us, both that He is the **LORD** our *sanctifier*, and also that He is the *Resurrection and the Life* unto us. They are evident *Tokens*, to all that believe and obey the *Gospel*, of *Salvation*, both in *Soul* and *Body*. They all speak to the general Assembly of worshipping Believers, in those Words of the *Apostle*, Heb. x. 19, 20, 21, 22. Having therefore, *Brethren*, boldness to enter into the *Holiest* by the *Blood* of **JESUS**, by a new and living *Way* which He hath consecrated for us, thro' the *Vail*, that is to say His *Flesh* ; And having an *High Priest* over the *House* of **GOD** ; Let us draw nigh with a true *Heart*, in full assurance of *Faith* ; having our *Hearts* sprinkled from an evil *Conscience*, and our *BODIES* washed as with *pure Water*.

F I N I S.
4 AP 65

